

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-06

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FM AMEMBASSY PANAMA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4056

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STADIS-LIMDIS////////////////

1. TREATY MATTERS AND POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS: AMBASSADOR COMMENTED ON LOCAL REACTION AND FAVORABLE EDITORIAL COMMENT ON AMBASSADOR BUNKER'S SEATTLE SPEECH. AMBASSADOR SUMMARIZED RECENT STUDENT FERMENT CHARACTERIZED BY MAY 19 DEMONSTRATION OF NATIONAL INSTITUTE STUDENTS DURING WHICH EDUCATION MINISTER ROYO WAS OBLIGED TO ACCOMMODATE STUDENT DEMANDS AND BY MAY 23 STUDENT ATTACK ON RADIO IMPACTO. HE COMMENTED ON GROWING GOP CONCERN OVER ITS ABILITY TO CONTROL STUDENT ELEMENTS.

2. CALL ON PRESIDENT LAKAS: FOR BENEFIT OF GENERAL FLEMING, SOUTHCOM CHIEF OF STAFF REPRESENTING CINC WHO ON OFFICIAL TRIP, AMBASSADOR REPORTED CALL ON PRESIDENT LAKAS FOR PURPOSE OF INTRODUCING GOVENOR. DURING VISIT AMBASSADOR AND GOVENOR TOOK OPPORTUNITY TO REAFFIRM LIMITED NATURE OF OLD FRANCE FIELD AGREEMENT AND NEED FOR PANAMANIAN ADHERENCE TO ITS TERMS. PRESIDENT GAVE ASSURANCES PANAMA HAS NO INTENTION OF GOING BEYOND AGREEMENT. AMBASSADOR SAID HE WILL ALSO RAISE THIS MATTER WITH PLANNING MINISTER WHOSE OFFICE MUST APPROVE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS, INCLUDING ANY FOR OLD FRANCE FIELD. GOVENOR STATED HE HAD INFORMED PRESIDENT OF CONGRESSIONAL AND OTHER PRESSURES TO INTEGRATE CANAL ZONE SCHOOL SYSTEMS. PRESIDENT WAS NONCOMMITTAL WHETHER GOP WOULD FAVOR OR OPPOSE SUCH INTEGRATION AND SEEMED TO PREFER

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NOT TO FACE ISSUE. HOWEVER, PRESIDENT OFFERED TO FIND

APPROPRIATE OPPORTUNITY TO BRING GOVERNOR AND EDUCATION MINISTER TOGETHER TO DISCUSS THIS PROBLEM. GOVERNOR ADDED HE WILL NOT BE ABLE TO IGNORE PRESSURES AND THAT IT WILL BE NECESSARY TO BREAK DOWN OUTSIDE IMAGE THAT CANAL ZONE MAINTAINS RACIST ATTITUDE TOWARDS ITS TWO SCHOOL SYSTEMS.

3. POTENTIAL FOR US-PANAMANIAN FRICTION: GOVERNOR EXPRESSED PCC AND CANAL ZONE GOVERNMENT CONCERN THAT INADVERTENT OR PLANNED ACTIONS BY EXTREMISTS BOTH IN CANAL ZONE AND REPUBLIC COULD LEAD TO SERIOUS INCIDENTS. HE CITED AS EXAMPLES PROVOCATIVE BUMPER STICKERS WITH JOHN BIRCH SLOGAN SEEN RECENTLY IN ZONE AS WELL AS PUBLIC COMPLAINTS BY PANAMANIAN WORKERS IN CANAL ZONE TO GOP AUTHORITIES ALLEGING DISCRIMINATION IN WORKING CONDITIONS. GOVERNOR STATED HE WILL MEET SOON WITH BOTH US AND LA CIVIC COUNCILS TO RECOMMEND THAT IN INTERESTS OF MAINTAINING GOOD RELATIONS AND OF PERSONAL SAFETY OF CANAL ZONE WORKERS AND THEIR FAMILIES ALL ACTIONS WHICH COULD PROVOKE INCIDENTS BE AVOIDED.

4. SQUATTERS: BOTH GOVERNOR AND SOUTHCOM REP MENTIONED SQUATTER PROBLEMS. TWENTY-TWO FAMILIES ILLEGALLY LOCATED IN PCC AREA IN ATLANTIC ZONE ARE BEING ASKED TO EVACUATE. COMPLIANCE IS NOT EXPECTED AND NATIONAL GUARD WILL BE ASKED TO HELP. REMAINING SQUATTERS IN MILITARY

AREAS, ORIGINALLY SCHEDULED TO BE OUT BY END OF MAY, PROBABLY WILL NOT ALL BE MOVED UNTIL END OF JULY. NATIONAL GUARD LIAISON OFFICER COORDINATING REMOVAL OF SQUATTERS HAS ASKED FOR NEW AERIAL SURVEY WHICH SOUTHCOM WILL PROVIDE.

5. SALE OF SCRAP IRON AND STEEL: GOVERNOR REPORTED THAT DEPITE ITS KEEN INTEREST EARLIER, GOP HAS AVOIDED SIGNING CONTRACT FOR PURCHASE OF IRON SCRAP AT AGREED PRICE OF \$37.50 PER TON. PCC INTENDS INFORM GOP IT WILL SELL SCRAP TO OTHER PURCHASER UNLESS CONTRACT IS SIGNED BY REASONABLY EARLY DATE.

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6. CUBAN EMBASSY VEHICLES: SOUTHCOM REP STATED TWO MORE CUBAN EMBASSY VEHICLES HAVE BEEN SIGHTED RECENTLY WITHIN FORT CLAYTON MILITARY RESERVATION. MILITARY POLICE HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO PHOTOGRAPH CARS BUT BELIEVE VEHICLES ARE SIMPLY PASSING THROUGH.

7. CINC'S RETIREMENT: GENERAL FLEMING REPORTED THAT GENERAL ROSSON PLANS DEPART CANAL ZONE FOR RETIREMENT

ON JULY 31. CINC HAS EXPRESSED DESIRE NOT TO HAVE
RETIREMENT REVIEW OR CUSTOMARY FAREWELL AFFAIRS. HE
PLANS TO MAKE DEPARTURE STATEMENT ON OCCASION 200TH
ANNIVERSARY U.S. ARMY IN MID-JUNE.
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